

2 Kings 24-25 – Thursday, June 23rd, 2016

2 Kings 24 -- 1 In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him.

- What Nebuchadnezzar does here is nothing shy of strategic brilliance in his conquering of the nations surrounding Babylon.
- Namely, that of Egypt and Assyria, vis-à-vis Judah, which is why he first will start out by making Jehoiakim a subject of his.
- Sadly this will begin the Babylonian captivity under the Babylonian empire in which Daniel and his fellow Hebrews are enslaved.

- Actually, this is the first of three invasions, which happened in 605 B.C., leading to the other two in 597 B.C. as well as 586 B.C.
- It's interesting to note verse one where we're told that Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar after becoming his vassal.
- What's interesting about this is he did this after Nebuchadnezzar had to return to Babylon to secure succession to the throne.

Of this one commentator wrote, "This campaign of Nebuchadnezzar was interrupted suddenly when he heard of his father's death and raced back to Babylon to secure his succession to the throne. He traveled about 500 miles in two weeks—remarkable speed for travel in that day. Nebuchadnezzar only had the time to take a few choice captives (such as Daniel), a few treasures and a promise of submission from Jehoiakim. ...When Nebuchadnezzar had to make a hurried return to Babylon, Jehoiakim took advantage of his absence and rebelled against him."

2 And the LORD sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. 3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.

- Here we have the reason as to why it is that God would allow Judah to enter into this period of captivity by the Babylonians.
- Notice in verse four where we're told God would not pardon them because of all the innocent blood that was shed in Jerusalem.
- The lesson to be learned from this is that often times God will allow this to happen to us, in order to bring us to repentance.

5 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 6 So Jehoiakim rested with his fathers. Then Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place. 7 And the king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the River Euphrates. 8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. 9 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

- Here we have yet another evil king of Israel with this Jehoiachin who is so evil that he would only reign for a total of 3-months.

Adam Clarke of this king wrote, "That he was a grievous offender against God, we learn from Jeremiah 22, which the reader may consult; and in the man's punishment, see his crimes."

Jeremiah 22:24-30 -- 24 "As surely as I live," declares the LORD, "even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. 25 I will deliver you into the hands of those who want to kill you, those you fear—Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Babylonians. 26 I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. 27 You will never come back to the land you long to return to." 28 Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot, an object no one wants? Why will he and his children be hurled out, cast into a land they do not know? 29 O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! 30 This is what the LORD says: "Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah."

10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, as his servants were besieging it. 12 Then Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner. 13 And he carried out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he cut in pieces all the articles of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. 14 Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land. 15 And he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. 16 All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. 17 Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 He also did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20 For because of the anger of the LORD this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

- It's important to note that the fall of Jerusalem came in stages and that Babylon started by taking the people who were skilled.
- The reason I mention that is because often times this is the strategy of Satan, such that these are the ones he tries to take out.
- I should note that Ezekiel was taken captive in this second Babylonian captivity, which is where he wrote the prophetic book.

2 Kings 25 -- 1 Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around. 2 So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 3 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4 Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city. And the king went by way of the plain. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. 6 So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him. 7 Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon. 8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 He burned the house of the LORD and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls of Jerusalem all around.

- There's something I'd like to point out that's not so easily seen at first related to why God allows the temple to be destroyed.
- Just the fact that God would allow this to happen would seem to indicate that He was simply unable to let everything continue.
- In other words, He would rather have it destroyed than to allow His people to continue with what they were doing in the temple.

11 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive the rest of the people who remained in the city and the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, with the rest of the multitude. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers. 13 The bronze pillars that were in the house of the LORD, and the carts and the bronze Sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried their bronze to Babylon. 14 They also took away the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. 15 The firepans and the basins, the things of solid gold and solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. 16 The two pillars, one Sea, and the carts, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. 17 The height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the capital on it was of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and pomegranates all around the capital were all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with a network. 18 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. 19 He also took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, five men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the chief recruiting officer of the army, who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. 20 So Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21 Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land. 22 Then he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left. 23 Now when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan the son of Careah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. 24 And Gedaliah took an oath before them and their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the servants of the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you." 25 But it happened in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck and killed Gedaliah, the Jews, as well as the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. 26 And all the people, small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans. 27 Now it came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. 28 He spoke kindly to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. 29 So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. 30 And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.

- While I realize that this is a rather gnarly way to end the book of 2 Kings there are a number of important take-away's from this.
- Chiefly, that of the importance of obedience. One thing I just can't quite wrap my mind around is how this didn't need to happen.
- By that I mean, this severe judgment of God on Israel could have been avoided if they would've but turned to God in repentance.
- To me, this is the reason why we have such graphic detail of what happened to Israel recorded for us in the pages of scripture.
- It's to serve as a warning to us; when it comes to continually and willfully disobeying the warnings from God and word of God.
- Had Israel heeded God's warnings to them, and both confessing their sins and forsaking their sins, God would've shown mercy.

Proverbs 28:13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.